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On the Cover



For story, see page 38.
PHOTOGRAPH: ADAM ALBRIGHT



Jif

Some Holiday Cookies Seem To Get All The Attention.



Irresistible Jif® Peanut Butter Cookies

INGREDIENTS:

- 3/4 cup **Jif®** Creamy Peanut Butter
- 1/2 cup **Crisco®** All-Vegetable Shortening
- 1 1/4 cups firmly packed light brown sugar
- 3 Tbsps milk
- 1 Tbsp vanilla extract
- 1 large egg
- 1 3/4 cups **Pillsbury BEST®** All Purpose Flour
- 3/4 tsp baking soda
- 3/4 tsp salt

DIRECTIONS:

Heat oven to 375°F—Combine peanut butter, shortening, brown sugar, milk and vanilla in a bowl—Beat at medium speed until well blended—Add egg—Beat until blended—Combine flour, baking soda and salt—Add to creamed mixture at low speed—Drop by rounded Tbsp 2 inches apart onto greased baking sheet—Flatten slightly and draw star pattern with edge of fork—Bake for 7 to 8 minutes or until set and just beginning to brown—Cool 2 minutes on baking sheet—Remove cookies to cooling rack to cool completely—Makes 3 dozen cookies



For more recipe ideas, go to **jif.com**

Editor's Note

Dear Friends,

The holidays are a time of great joy at my house. Each year, as my grandmother and I make time to bake our favorite holiday recipes together, we realize what a wonderful treat home-baked goods are. As our lives—and the world around us—become busier and more hectic, the simple act of baking a pan of brownies or a batch of cookies revives our spirits and nurtures our souls. When we measure and mix and pull pans of fragrant cookies from the oven, our cares slip away. We converse about the season and our hopes and dreams for the new year ... and all seems right within our world.

This season, I hope you experience that same holiday spirit. Spend quality time in the kitchen with those you love and package homemade treats for gifts, cookie-exchange parties and potlucks. This issue of *Holiday Cookies* offers inspiration for your efforts, with recipes ranging from old-fashioned sugar cookies (page 69) to twists on candy cane cookies (page 37).

You'll also discover clever ways to package goodies so the parcels also become eye candy. Any container, whether a never-used paint can or a coffee mug can be decorated with love using scrapbook papers and embellishments, along with your personal touch.

Some of my favorite recipes are "Best-Ever Cookies," page 58, and "Healthy Holiday Treats," page 84. Find ways to create memories in "Kids in the Kitchen," page 16. Check out baking products on page 22 and wrapping ideas, page 10.



Along the way, be sure to take time to sip coffee and cocoa with friends and family and nibble on homemade cookies fresh from the oven.

Alison Ventling
Editor

PHOTOGRAPH: KING AU HAIR AND MAKEUP: RONA MARTINO

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ON THE WEB:

'Tis the season to kick into gear for the holidays! Visit *WomansDay.com* for decorating tips, holiday recipes, craft ideas and health tips to make this Christmas the merriest yet.

Stress-Free Holiday

It's the time of year when invitations flood your mailbox, presents must be purchased and treats need baking. Your to-do list is a mile long! Visit *WomansDay.com/stressfree* for 29 tips to take the hassle out of the holidays, all designed to get you through the season headache-free.



THREE CHEERS: Stocking stuffers aren't just presents; set them out early as decoration for your mantel.

PHOTOGRAPH: MICHAEL PARTENIO

COMING NEXT!



Comfort Food

- Slow Cooking Classics
- Food Network's *Iron Chef* competitors give their own recipes.
- Hot and Hearty Soups



Holiday Menus

- Tips for leftover turkey and ham
- Complete meals for the season
- Drink recipes to warm you up

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DANCING DEER: A stack of whimsical Dancing Deer nesting boxes makes a unique display or great gift box set. $7.50 set of three. 800-547-9727 **nashvillewraps.com**



RED DOT BAKERY BAGS: Flat white paper bags printed with red polka dots and frame. Perfect for packaging cookies, nuts or candies. Lined with glassine to prevent moisture and oils from soaking through. FDA approved for food use. ¼ lb. size is 4¾×6¾". $3 for package of 12; **layercakeshop.com**





CHOCOLATE WINDOW BOX: Eco-friendly cacao-paper window boxes are handmade from cacao-leaf paper and 100% recycled box board. $22.50; 877-RAW-CHOC **crucacao.com**



FLOURISH FAVOR BAGS: This package includes 12 handmade Organdy Ribbon Paper Bags and 12 self-adhesive labels. Bag dimensions are 4½×7×2½". 800-659-3049 **midoriribbon.com**



ALUMINUM BOXES: Pack tools or lunch or, instead of gift wrap, tie on a bow and you're done! Sizes include: 6¾×4×2", 8×5×2¼", 9×6×2½". $20; 919-834-6260 **ornamentea.com**



TREAT BOXES: Show off a perfect gift in a window box. Great for candies or tiny cookies. Includes seal/sticker sheet. 4½×4½×1½". $3.19 for a pack of three; 800-794-5866 **wilton.com**





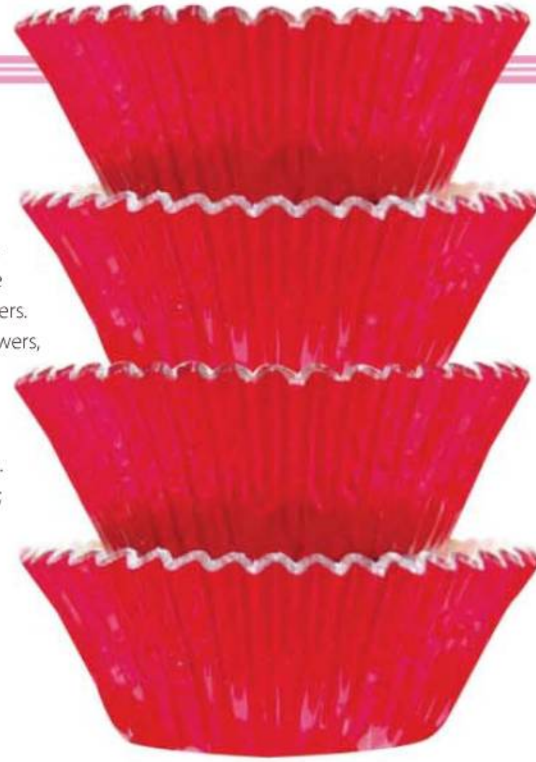
SWEET PACKAGES: Adorable Little Gift Boxes from SemiKolon are great party favor holders and make even repackaged drugstore candies look fabulous! Flower seeds, a handwritten note or a single chocolate truffle instantly become a thoughtful and lovely party favor when well-packaged. Set of 12, available in yellow, red, blue and chocolate. They measure 1×1.8×1.8×1.1". $25; 877-400-5263 **seejanework.com**

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BAKERS TWINE: This famous red-and-white combo twine used in pastry shops and bakeries worldwide is now available in ribbon form. Use the colorful ribbon for wrapping favors and small gifts. It has a matte finish and comes in 1/16" width. Pricing: $21 for 60 feet, $26 for 100 yards and $60 for 500 yards. 877-323-0001 **goodthingsweddingfavors.com**

FOIL BAKING CUPS: To make elegant cupcakes and muffins even more glam, bake them in foil baking liners. Ideal for holidays, showers, anniversaries or weddings. Standard-size baking cups are 3" wide and 1¼" deep. 32 per package. $2.95; 800-776-0575 **kitchenkrafts.com**





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ALLEX SCISSORS: Cut papers and ribbons neatly with these super-sharp, super-stylish powder-coated stainless-steel scissors from Allex Japan. Allex Scissors are sized to fit comfortably in your hand and include rubber insets in the handles. 6 ½×2½". $40; 323-655-1905 **fitzsu.com**



PRETTY PAPER: 100% recycled cotton fiber; 10 sheets per package. Dimensions: 21×29". Many styles available; shown above are Reindeer, Flourish, Woodlands and Poinsettia. 800-369-3049 **midoriribbon.com**



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Bake up a batch of good memories by inviting kids to make cookies with you. Colorful bake gear and easy-to-use cookie decorations keep the event kid-friendly and fun.
PHOTOGRAPHED BY PETE KRUMHARDT

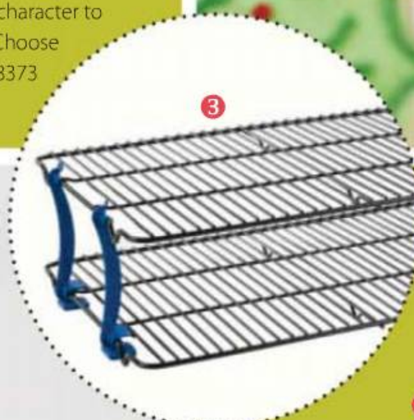
Kids in the Kitchen





1: PEARLIZED SUGAR Red Coarse Sugar in a 5.25-oz. size by Wilton. $4.49 ; 734-429-1320 **shopbakersnook.com** **2: EDIBLE WRITING PENS** Americolor Gourmet Food Decorating pens will write on any firm food surface. 10 count set packaged in zipper pouch. $15.99; 800-420-6088 **global-sugarart.com** **3: COOL IT** Stackable Cooling Grids by Nordic Ware® overcome the challenge of running out of counter space when baking, creating a vertical cooling space that takes up less room than traditional racks. 800-600-9817 **organize.com** **4: COOKIE PRESS** One-handed trigger action usable by left- or right-handed bakers. Bake cookies and pastries using 20 interchangeable discs and 6 pastry nozzles. Barrel measures 6"× 1.6". $29.95; 800-663-8810 **cooking.com** **5: GLITTER GLAM** Add dimension and character to baked goods with Edible Colored Glitter. Choose from 8 colors in ¼ oz. jars. $1.80; 866-662-8373 **grammascutters.com**









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1 delicious recipe
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McCormick® Gingerbread Men

3 cups flour
2 tsp. **McCormick® Ground Ginger**
1 tsp. **McCormick® Ground Cinnamon**
1 tsp. baking soda
¼ tsp. **McCormick® Ground Nutmeg**
¼ tsp. salt
¾ cup (1 ½ sticks) butter, softened
¾ cups firmly packed brown sugar
½ cup molasses
1 egg

MIX flour, ginger, cinnamon, baking soda, nutmeg and salt. Beat butter and brown sugar in large bowl with electric mixer on medium speed until light and fluffy. Add molasses and egg; beat well. Gradually beat in flour mixture on low speed until well mixed. Press dough into a thick flat disk. Wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate 4 hours or overnight.

ROLL out dough to 1/4-inch thickness on lightly floured work surface. Cut into gingerbread men shapes with 5-inch cookie cutter. Place 1 inch apart on ungreased baking sheets.

BAKE in preheated 350°F degree oven 8 to 10 minutes or until edges of cookies are set and just beginning to brown. Cool on baking sheets 1 to 2 minutes. Remove to wire racks; cool completely. Decorate as desired.

Makes 2 dozen.

Visit mccormick.com to learn how to use this gingerbread dough for other delicious recipes: White Chocolate Kissed Gingerbread Cookies and Gingerbread Whoopie Pies with Lemon Crème.



The Taste You Trust®



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1: COOKIE EMBOSSER By Wilton, load one of the 3 imprint disks in the cutter, cut the cookie, then press the plunger with disk still in place to imprint the design. Bake, cool and serve. Disks are 2 ⅞ in. diameter. $7.99; 800-794-5866 **wilton.com** **2: ICING EYES** Add eyes to animal and people cookies using Icing Eyes. Each package contains more than 100 dried Icing Eyes. In the ¼" size, choose white, blue, yellow and pink with various pupil sizes. Other sizes and colors available. $2.50; 620-421-0654 **coppergifts.com**



cookie MAGIC

The right tools and embellishments are the secret ingredients to delightful and delicious baked goods.





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1: CUT IT OUT Fox Run Craftsmen® 5-pc. Stainless Steel Cookie Cutter. This set features a classic circular design in 5 different sizes for versatility that allows you to create anything from cookies to biscuits to pastries. Features 18/8 stainless-steel construction, with polished finish, plus convenient handles to provide support and ease of use. $29.99; 866-887-8884 **kohls.com** **2: LET IT SNOW** Snowflake cookie cutters are great for winter and the holidays. Available in several styles and sizes. $1.50 to $2.99; 800-934-3997 **karenscookies.net** **3: CANDY MOLD** Merry Christmas Tree & Star Candy along with Santa and Stocking Mold make candy making easy! For use with surgar or chocolate base suckers with an easy stick holding slot.$2.90; 866-662-8373 **grammascutters.com** **4: METRIC WONDER CUP** A Wonder Cup measures wet and dry ingredients in both metric and US scales. It eliminates cleanup between ingredients and is perfect for shortening, peanut butter and other hard-to-measure ingredients. $9.95; 866-745-7892 **preparedpantry.com** **5: MARBLE ROLLING PIN** This deluxe rolling pin with marble comes with its own hardwood base. Marble surface keeps dough cool for better pastries and pies. $18.98; 866-745-7892 **preparedpantry.com**



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Cookie Magic

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1: BUNDT PAN This pan's dramatic swirling shape captures the vintage style of the original Bundt pan from 1950. NordicWare based its design on an old German stoneware mold for baking a ring-shaped kugelhopf, similar to our American coffee cake. Made of durable cast aluminum, it features a center tube that ensures even baking. 10" diam., 4" high. 877-812-6235 **williams-sonoma.com** **2: EASY COOKIES** Stainless Cookie Press & Decorating Set with Storage Box comes with everything you need to make and decorate your homemade cookies: 16 different cookie disks, decorating bottle for icing or frosting, decorating spatula, stainless barrel with window to check dough level, storage box to keep it all organized. $40; 800-662-5882 **kuhnrikon.com** **3: EASY INDIVIDUAL LOAVES** The Mini Loaf Pan by Wilton® feature 6 deep cavities that allow you to create adorable, homemade gifts with ease. $12.99; 800-600-9817 **organize.com** **4: GIFT CAKELET PAN** Bake 6 little cakes that will be the hit of any celebration. The pan bakes cakes shaped like gift-wrapped packages, 3 round and 3 square. Made by NordicWare. $36; 877-812-6235 **williams-sonoma.com**

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1: PEARLIZED SUGAR Pearlized Sugar pearls are 4mm with a blush pearl finish. Similar to dragees, these little sugar beads add dazzle to your cookies. Comes in a 4-oz., kid-friendly, 4" tall plastic bottle with a screw-top lid. $3.95; 866-756-6543 **cookiecutter.com** **2: CANDY CANE SPRINKLES** Peppermint-flavored sprinkles in the shape of candy canes make decorating Christmas cookies or cupcakes extra fun. $.99/1 oz.; 734-429-1320 **shopbakersnook.com** **3: TOP IT OFF** Elite Candy Carousel (with candy) by KitchenArt®. The set includes 8 candy bottles and 8 bags of candy sprinkles for decorating cookies, cakes, brownies and other baked goods. $35.99; 800-600-9817 **organize.com** **4: FOOD COLOR SPRAY** Also from Cookie Cutter, this easy-to-use spray is like an airbrush in a convenient can! No mess, taste-free formula; add a little color or a lot. Certified Kosher. 1.5-oz. can. $3.29; 866-756-6543 **cookiecutter.com** **5: GEL FOOD COLORS** Included are six .75 ounce bottles in black, blue, yellow, green, pink and red. $10.95 866-765-2433 **chefsresource.com**

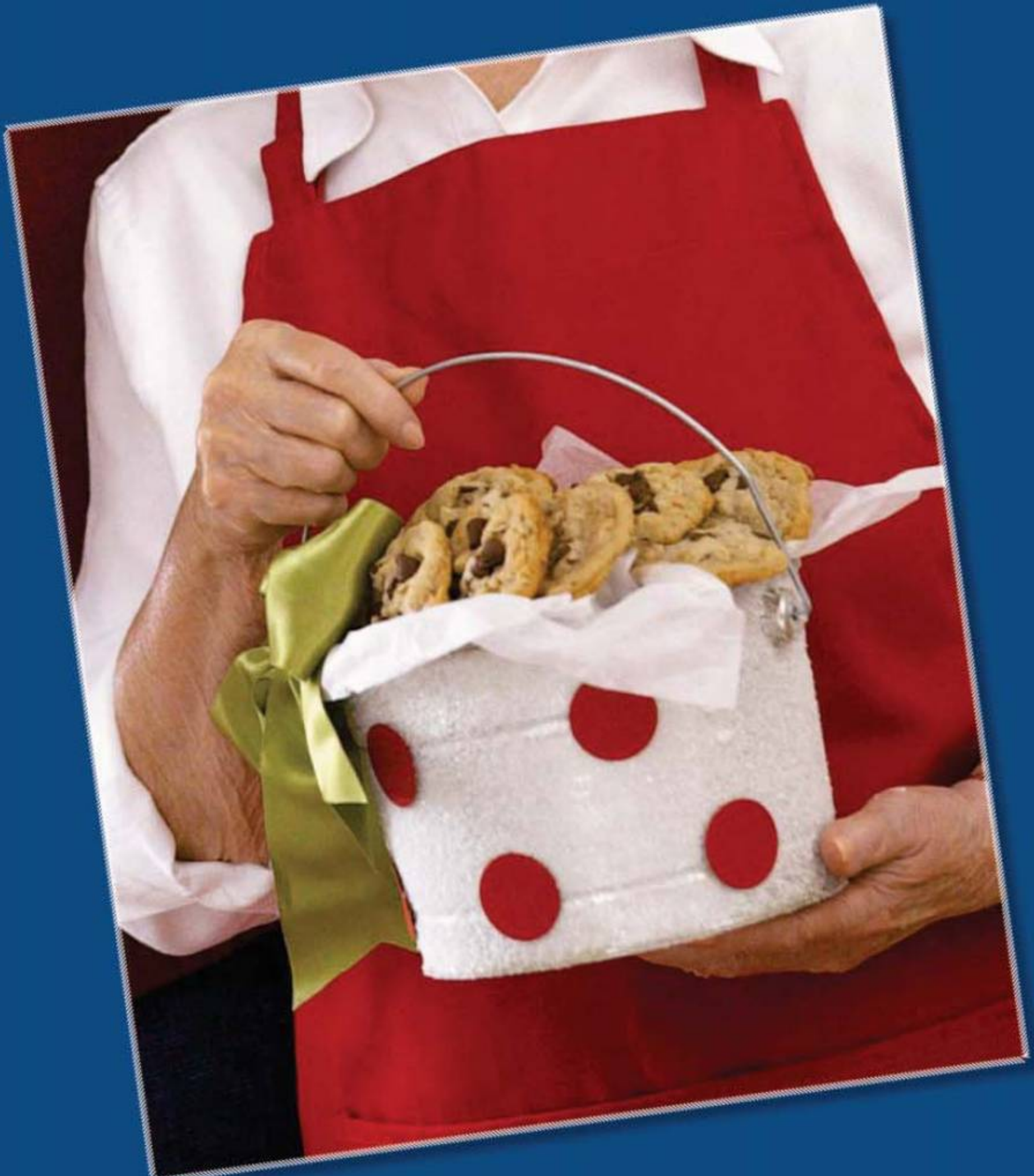
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Special DELIVERY

PHOTOGRAPHED BY **KING AU**

Homemade cookies packaged in pretty buckets will bring smiles to your neighbors' faces. Purchase painted buckets or make your own from clean, never-used paint cans. *Turn to pages 30 and 32 for instructions.*





Packaging Tip:

Fast and fancy pails

- **DECORATE PAILS.** Apply red sticky-back paper dots to the outside of painted tin buckets from a discount store. Add other stickers such as stars, Christmas trees and letters to create pretty gift holders. Finish the package by tying a satin or grosgrain bow and a gift tag to the handle.
- **PROTECT COOKIES.** Place crumpled tissue paper in the bottom of the pail and cover with a sheet of tissue paper. Place cooled cookies in the bucket, adding more tissue sheets between cookie layers.



Chocolate Chip Crunch Cookies

- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 egg
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 3½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon cream of tartar
- 1 cup quick or old-fashioned rolled oats
- 1 cup flaked or shredded coconut
- 1 cup crisp rice cereal
- 1 12-ounce package (2 cups) semisweet chocolate chips

MAKES 90

Crispy yet tender, these chocolate-studded cookies are a favorite of both kids and adults.

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. In a large mixing bowl, beat together butter, oil and sugars.

2. Add egg and vanilla; beat well.

3. Stir together flour, salt, baking soda and cream of tartar; beat into butter mixture.

4. Stir in oats, coconut, rice cereal and chocolate chips.

5. Use a small cookie scoop or tablespoon to drop 1-inch balls of dough about 2 inches apart onto lightly greased cookie sheets. (Cookies will spread.)

6. Bake in preheated oven for 9 to 10 minutes or until no imprint is left when lightly touched with a finger. (Cookies do not get brown on top).

7. Remove from oven and allow to cool 1 to 2 minutes before transferring cookies to a wire rack to cool completely.



Wrapping Tip:
Repurposed paint cans

- **COVER CAN WITH PAPER.** Wrap scrapbook paper around a clean, never-used paint can from a crafts store, using a mat knife to trim excess paper and around the handles. Glue paper to the can using spray adhesive or double-stick adhesive tape.
- **DECORATE WITH RIBBON AND A LABEL.** Make a custom label on the computer and cut it out. Wrap ribbon around the can, overlapping the raw edges, and tape to the front of the can; use double-stick tape to adhere the label over the ribbon to cover the raw edges.

Cherry Winks

- **2¼ cups all-purpose flour**
- **2 teaspoons baking powder**
- **½ teaspoon salt**
- **¾ cup butter, softened**
- **1 cup granulated sugar**
- **2 large eggs**
- **2 tablespoons milk**
- **1 teaspoon vanilla**
- **1 cup chopped dates**
- **1 cup chopped pecans**
- **⅓ cup finely chopped maraschino cherries**
- **2½ cups crushed cornflakes cereal**
- **15 whole maraschino cherries, cut in quarters**

MAKES 60

Festive cherry-crowned cookies are so delicious they'll turn even the pickiest eater into a date lover.

1. Preheat oven to 350° F. Stir together flour, baking powder and salt. Set aside.
2. In large mixing bowl, beat butter and sugar until fluffy.
3. Add eggs and beat well.
4. Stir in milk and vanilla.
5. Add flour mixture. Mix well.
6. Stir in dates, pecans and chopped cherries.
7. Shape by teaspoonfuls into balls.
8. Roll balls in cornflakes. Place on greased cookie sheets and top each cookie with a quartered cherry.
9. Bake in preheated oven for 10 to 12 minutes or until lightly browned.


cheery

Grandma's Tender Sugar Cookies

- 1 cup shortening
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2 large eggs
- ¼ cup milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 3¼ cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1½ teaspoons salt
- Powdered sugar for dusting

MAKES 30

stores well

These classic cookies are perfect fillers for gift tins because they are palate-pleasing and easy to pack.

1. Preheat oven to 350° F. In a large mixing bowl, beat together shortening and sugar.

2. Add eggs, milk and vanilla.

3. Stir together flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Add to shortening mixture.

4. Dust surface with powdered sugar. Roll out dough, cut with cookie cutters and place on parchment-paper-lined cookie sheets.

5. Bake in preheated oven for 9 to 11 minutes.

6. Remove cookies to wire rack to cool.

7. When cookies are cool, dust with powdered sugar or frost with Sugar Cookie Frosting.



Sugar Cookie Frosting

- ¼ cup shortening
- 2 cups powdered sugar
- 1 teaspoon almond extract

MAKES FROSTING FOR 12 COOKIES

1. In a medium bowl, beat together all ingredients. Thin with a little water, if desired.

Chocolate Walnut Cookies

- ½ cup butter, softened
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 large egg, well-beaten
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1⅔ cups all-purpose flour
- 6 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ cup milk
- 1 cup chopped English walnuts
- 30 walnut halves

MAKES 30

1. Preheat oven to 350° F. Beat together butter and brown sugar.
2. Add egg and vanilla; mix well.
3. In a medium bowl, stir together flour, cocoa powder, salt and baking soda.
4. Alternately add flour mixture and milk to butter mixture, starting and ending with flour mixture.
5. Stir in chopped walnuts.
6. Drop by teaspoonfuls onto a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper.
7. Bake in preheated oven for 10 to 12 minutes.
8. Remove cookies to wire rack to cool. Frost with Perfect Chocolate Frosting. Top each cookie with a walnut half.



Perfect Chocolate Frosting

- ¾ cup butter, melted
- 1 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 4 cups powdered sugar
- ½ cup milk
- 1½ teaspoons vanilla extract

MAKES FROSTING FOR 30 COOKIES

1. In a large bowl, stir together butter and cocoa powder.
2. Alternately add powdered sugar and milk to cocoa mixture, beating to spreading consistency.
3. Stir in vanilla. Add a small amount of additional milk, if needed.


kids' fave



Baking Tip:

Gather the generations

- **ROLL OUT SOME FUN.** Baking together is a quality family activity that bonds kids and adults. Invite everyone to join in baking-day activities; assign tasks according to abilities.

- **BAKE AND TASTE.** Sampling cookies is half the fun; make plenty so you all can share your yummy treats fresh from the oven.

Candy Cane Twists

- ½ cup shortening
- ½ cup butter, softened
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon almond extract or ½ teaspoon peppermint extract
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- Red food coloring
- ⅓ cup crushed peppermint candy (optional)
- ⅓ cup red colored sugar (optional)

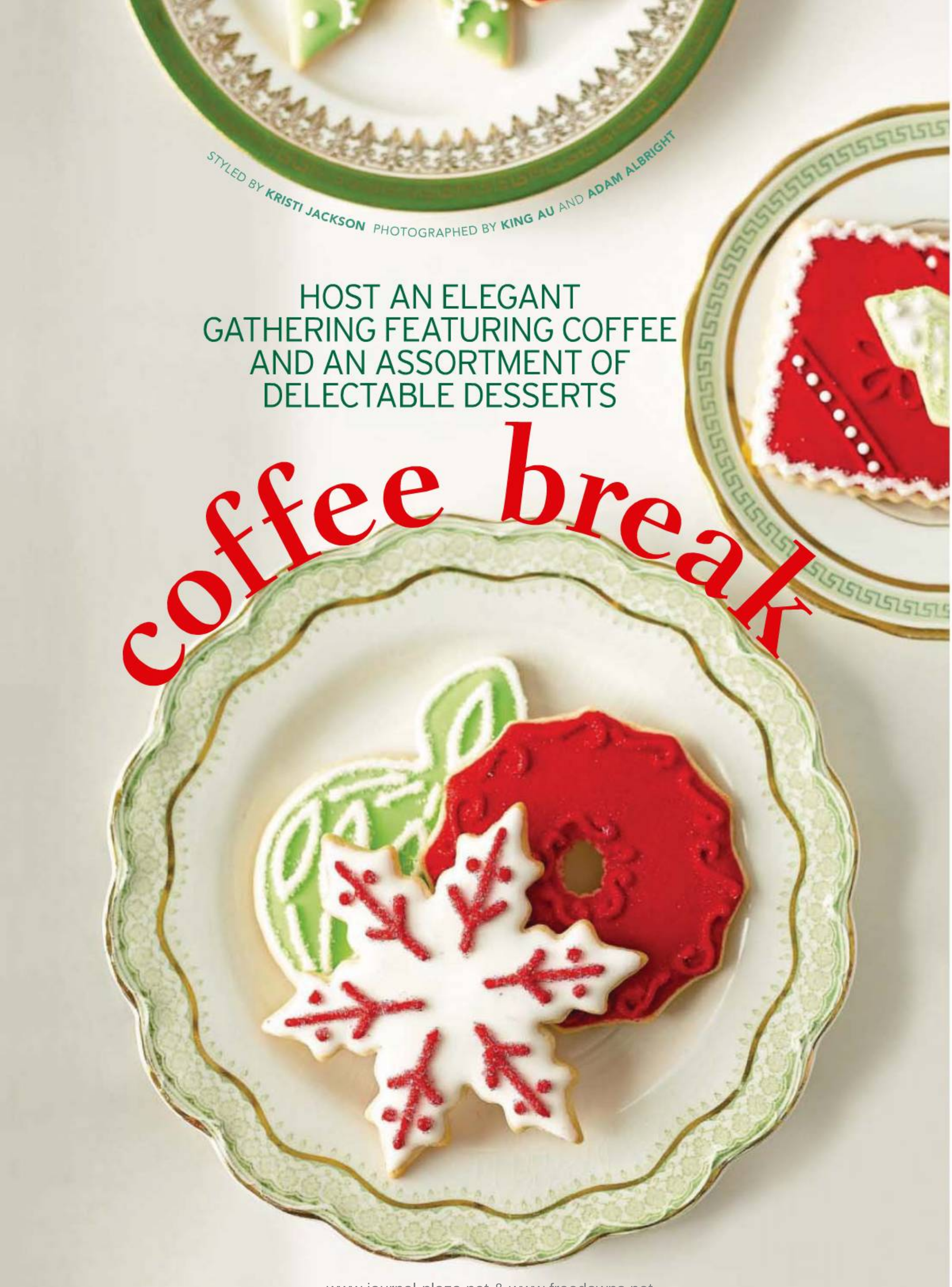
MAKES ABOUT 24

Let kids twist and form candy canes from the dough. Optional chopped candy and extract make them taste like peppermint sticks, too.

1. In a large mixing bowl, beat together shortening, butter, powdered sugar, egg and extracts. Stir together flour and salt; beat into butter mixture until combined. Divide dough in half. Add enough red food coloring to one half of dough to reach desired color; stir to evenly distribute color. (If desired, stir crushed peppermint candy into red dough or save to sprinkle on top of cookies after baking.) To make shaping easier, chill dough 30 minutes.

2. Preheat oven to 375°F. Using 1 tablespoon of dough for each rope, roll dough on a lightly floured surface using fingers in a gentle back-and-forth motion, forming a 4-inch-long smooth rope. There should be an equal number of plain and red ropes. Place a rope of each color side by side; press together lightly and gently twist. Arrange about 1½ inches apart on an ungreased baking sheet, curving one end into a cane. Bake in preheated oven about 8 minutes or until cookies are firm to the touch (not brown). If desired, immediately sprinkle with peppermint candy or red sugar.

3. Cool for 1 minute before transferring cookies to wire rack to cool completely. (Note: Cookies break easily at the curve, so take extra care in handling them.) Store in a tightly covered container, using waxed paper between layers.



STYLED BY KRISTI JACKSON PHOTOGRAPHED BY KING AU AND ADAM ALBRIGHT

HOST AN ELEGANT GATHERING FEATURING COFFEE AND AN ASSORTMENT OF DELECTABLE DESSERTS

coffee break



COME FOR COFFEE: Hosting a coffee break for friends over the holidays is the grown-up version of a little girl's tea party. Send a formal invitation and let guests know they should dress up for the occasion. Pull out all your assorted china plates for serving and displaying treats and serve coffee in real china cups with saucers. Linens and fresh flowers on the display table and soft music in the background add to the ambience.



SERVING TIP:

When serving an assortment of cookies at a gathering, it's a sure bet that everyone will want to sample each variety. Bake cookies smaller than normal or let guests know it's OK to cut or break them in half. Plan several cookies for each guest and package extras in pretty bags or boxes to send home as favors.



GINGER MOLASSES COOKIES

- ¾ cup unsalted butter
- 1½ cups granulated sugar, divided
- ¼ cup light molasses
- 1 large egg
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground cloves
- ½ teaspoon ground ginger
- ½ teaspoon salt

MAKES 40

Just looking at these soft cookies will make your mouth water.

1. Melt butter and let cool slightly. Beat in 1 cup of the sugar, molasses and egg until smooth.

2. In a separate bowl, stir together flour, baking soda, cinnamon, cloves, ginger and salt. Add to molasses mixture and mix well. Cover and refrigerate at least 4 hours or overnight.

3. Preheat oven to 350°F. Shape dough into 1-inch balls and roll in remaining ½ cup sugar. Place balls 3 inches apart on ungreased baking sheets. Flatten slightly. Bake in preheated oven about 8 minutes or until set. Cool on wire racks.



CHEWY CARAMEL OATMEAL BARS

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 cups quick oats
- 1½ cups packed brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1½ cups unsalted butter, melted
- 1 12-ounce bag semisweet chocolate chips
- 1 14-ounce bag caramels (about 40)
- 5 tablespoons milk

MAKES 24

Loaded with luscious ingredients, these treats are sure to be a favorite.

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. In a large bowl, combine flour, oats, brown sugar, baking soda and salt. Stir in melted butter until thoroughly mixed. Set aside half of the mixture.

2. Press the remaining half of the oat mixture into a 13×9×2-inch baking pan. Bake in preheated oven for 10 minutes. Sprinkle chocolate chips on baked crust.

3. In a microwave-safe bowl, combine caramels and milk. Microwave on high power about 3 minutes or until caramels are melted, stirring every 30 seconds. Pour caramel mixture over chocolate chips. Sprinkle reserved oat mixture on caramel layer. Bake 20 minutes. Cool completely; cut into bars.

- 1 cup shortening
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2 large eggs
- ¼ cup skim milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 3¼ cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- Flour for rolling cookies

MAKES 30

SUGAR COOKIE FROSTING

- 2 cups powdered sugar
- ¼ cup shortening
- 3 tablespoons water
- 1 teaspoon almond extract
- Food coloring (optional)
- Decorator sprinkles (optional)

MAKES 1½ CUPS

Create designer cookies using a variety of cookie cutters and frosting colors.

1. In a large mixing bowl, beat together shortening and sugar.
2. Add eggs, milk and vanilla; beat until combined.
3. In a separate bowl, stir together flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Add to shortening mixture and beat until well combined.
4. Cover and chill in the refrigerator for at least 2 hours or overnight.
5. Preheat oven to 350°F. Dust work surface with flour. Roll dough ⅛ inch thick, cut with cookie cutters and place cutouts on cookie sheets lined with parchment paper.
6. Bake in preheated oven for 9 to 11 minutes.
7. Transfer cookies to wire rack to cool. Frost with Sugar Cookie Frosting.

SUGAR COOKIE FROSTING

1. In a medium bowl, beat together powdered sugar, shortening, water and almond extract. Add food coloring, if desired.
2. Spread frosting on cookies and, if desired, top with sprinkles.

SUGAR COOKIES



- ½ cup unsalted butter (at room temperature)
- ½ cup plus 2 tablespoons powdered sugar, divided
- 2 teaspoons grated orange zest
- ½ teaspoon ground ginger
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 cup all-purpose flour

MAKES ABOUT 12

Crisp and buttery shortbread boasts a twist of citrus and spice.

1. Preheat oven to 325°F. In a mixing bowl, beat butter with an electric mixer on medium speed for 30 seconds. Add ½ cup powdered sugar, orange zest, ginger and cinnamon; beat until thoroughly combined. Beat in flour until well mixed, kneading if necessary until smooth.

2. On a lightly floured cookie sheet, roll dough to ¼ inch thick. Cut dough into desired shapes. (Or, lightly dust shortbread mold with powdered sugar; press dough into mold and chill 15 minutes. Invert mold onto cookie sheet to release dough.)

3. Bake in preheated oven for 22 to 24 minutes (30 to 36 minutes if using cookie molds) or until lightly golden. Cool on a wire rack. Sift remaining powdered sugar over shortbread.

ORANGE SPICED SHORTBREAD





TRIPLE-CHOCOLATE CRINKLE COOKIES

- 2 ounces semisweet baking chocolate
- 2 ounces bittersweet baking chocolate
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 4 large eggs
- ½ cup canola oil
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 cup dark chocolate chips
- ½ cup powdered sugar

MAKES 72

Two baking chocolates and dark chocolate chips go into the dough to make the cookies triply tempting.

1. In a microwave-safe bowl, microwave the semisweet and bittersweet baking chocolate on high power in 30-second intervals until melted, stirring after every interval. Set aside. In a small bowl, stir together flour, baking powder and salt; set aside.

2. In a large mixing bowl, combine melted chocolate, sugar, eggs, oil and vanilla. Beat until smooth.

3. Gradually add flour mixture, beating well after each addition. Stir in chocolate chips. Cover and refrigerate for 3 to 24 hours.

4. Preheat oven to 375°F. For each cookie, shape a tablespoon of dough into a ball and drop into powdered sugar. Roll in powdered sugar to coat generously. Place balls 2 inches apart on lightly greased cookie sheets. Bake in preheated oven for 10 to 12 minutes or until tops spring back when lightly touched. Let stand on cookie sheets for 2 minutes, then transfer to a wire rack to cool.

SWEET TIP: *Freeze cookies in tightly covered plastic containers between layers of waxed paper.*



PUMPKIN-DATE SCONES WITH MAPLE GLAZE

- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1 heaping teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 cup cold unsalted butter, cut into small cubes
- ½ cup canned pumpkin
- ½ cup buttermilk
- ½ cup chopped dates
- 3 large eggs, divided
- 1 tablespoon milk
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- ¼ cup pure maple syrup
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

MAKES 8

This not-too-sweet cousin to a biscuit is bursting with holiday flavors.

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. In a mixing bowl, combine flour, granulated sugar, baking powder, cinnamon, ginger, salt and nutmeg. With mixer running on low speed, add butter and mix until pieces are pea-size.

2. In a separate bowl, combine pumpkin, buttermilk, dates and two of the eggs. Add to flour mixture; mix just until blended. Dough will be sticky.

3. Turn out dough onto a well-floured surface. Pat into a 10-inch circle. Cut into eight wedges. Place wedges on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper.

4. Beat together remaining egg and 1 tablespoon milk; brush egg wash on dough wedges. Bake in preheated oven about 30 minutes or until golden brown. Cool 5 minutes.

5. Meanwhile, for glaze, whisk together powdered sugar, maple syrup and vanilla. Drizzle 1 tablespoon of glaze on each scone.

SWEET TIP: *When paired with tea, scones are delicious any time of day—from breakfast to late-night snacks.*



PHOTOGRAPHED BY **PETE KRUMHARDT** STYLED BY **SUZANNE MORRISSEY**



PACKING TIP:

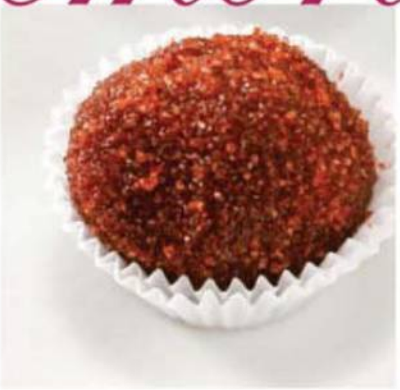
TRIM *the top edge of a gift bag in a wavy design.* **ROLL** *corrugated cardboard cut a half inch taller than the bag and long enough so it can be coiled inside the bag.* **GLUE** *on rickrack trim and hang card-stock tags decorated with seasonal snowflake-motif rubber stamps.* **FILL** *with English Toffee.*

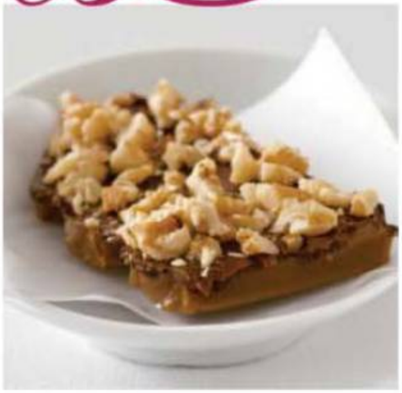
ENGLISH TOFFEE
(recipe on page 57)



sweet *Memories*







WHIP UP HOMEMADE CANDIES THAT TEMPT TASTE BUDS WITH A SWEET BLAST FROM THE PAST. ENJOY UPDATED VERSIONS OF FUDGE, CARAMELS, TAFFY, BONBONS, BRITTLE, MARSHMALLOWS AND TOFFEE.



Chocolate Fudge with Walnuts

- 3 cups granulated sugar
- 1 cup evaporated milk
- ½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- ½ cup chopped walnuts

MAKES 64

1. In a 3-quart saucepan, combine sugar, evaporated milk and cocoa powder. Bring to a hard boil, then reduce heat to medium.
2. Continue cooking until it reaches the soft-ball stage, 234°F (112°C).
3. Once the mixture has cooled to lukewarm (110°F), add butter, vanilla and chopped walnuts.
4. Pour mixture into a buttered 8-inch-square baking dish. Cool; cut into 1-inch pieces.

White Chocolate Raspberry Fudge

- 2 cups miniature marshmallows
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- ½ cup heavy cream
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1¾ cups white chocolate chips, divided
- 2 tablespoons seedless raspberry preserves
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract

MAKES 24

1. Coat a 1½-quart loaf pan with nonstick cooking spray.
2. In a medium saucepan, combine marshmallows, sugar, cream, butter and salt.
3. Cook, stirring constantly, over medium heat to melt butter and marshmallows. Boil 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
4. Meanwhile, combine ¼ cup white chocolate chips and raspberry preserves; microwave 15 to 20 seconds and stir until smooth. Set aside.
5. Remove marshmallow mixture from heat; stir in 1½ cups white chocolate chips and vanilla. Pour into pan.
6. Drop spoonfuls of raspberry mixture on fudge; use knife to swirl.
7. Cool at room temperature 3 hours. Store up to 10 days in an airtight container.

PACKING TIP:

PURCHASE *white candy boxes in sizes to hold White Chocolate Raspberry Fudge for a family or an individual serving.*
DECORATE *the large family-size box by lining the lid with scrapbook paper adhered with double-stick tape and wrapping the outside of the box with ribbon and a label.*
EMBELLISH *a tiny box by sewing on a button and wrapping with colored string or floss. Small boxes are perfect as gifts for one or as table favors.*





PACKING TIP:

GREEN CONE. **WRAP** *an ice-cream cone with colored card stock and* **MARK** *the card stock's upper edge with a pencil to make a graceful heart just below the ice cream cone's upper edge.* **TRIM** *excess paper-by cutting just below the pencil mark. Use a hole punch to* **PUNCH** *through the paper layers and* **INSERT** *a fabric-covered brad fitted over a tag and ribbon. (Also* **PUNCH** *a hole through the tag and ribbon so the brad can be pushed through.) Use a decorative punch to* **DETAIL** *the upper edge of the paper cone.*

RED CONE. **CUT** *and* **SHAPE** *a white card-stock cone and* **COVER** *with a red cone cut ¼ inch larger. Use a decorative punch to* **DETAIL** *the upper edge of the red cone. Use double-stick tape to* **ADHERE** *the cones together.* **WRAP** *with a ribbon and attach a tag.*

CANDY WRAPPER. **COVER** *waxed-paper-wrapped taffy or caramels in butcher paper* **CUT** *into small squares.* **EMBELLISH** *the wraps with snowflakes* **PUNCHED** *using the same decorative punch as the cones.*

Caramels

- 1 cup butter
- 2¼ cups packed brown sugar
- Dash salt
- 1 cup light corn syrup
- 1 14-ounce can sweetened condensed milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

MAKES 48

1. In a heavy 3-quart saucepan, melt butter; add brown sugar and salt. Mix well; stir in light corn syrup. Gradually add milk, stirring constantly.
2. Cook and stir over medium heat until candy reaches firm-ball stage (245°F), approximately 12 to 15 minutes.
3. Remove from heat; stir in vanilla. Pour into buttered 13×9×2-inch pan. Cool; cut into 1-inch squares.



Old-Fashioned Taffy

- 2½ cups granulated sugar
- 1½ cups light corn syrup
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ cup evaporated milk
- 2 tablespoons butter

MAKES ABOUT 100

1. In a heavy, large saucepan over low heat combine sugar, corn syrup and salt. Stir until the sugar dissolves; cover briefly with a lid to get any sugar crystals off the sides of the pan. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly.
2. Add evaporated milk in a thin stream, stirring constantly. Cook to 248°F (120°C) or until a small amount of mixture dropped into cold water forms a ball that holds until pressed. Remove from heat. Add butter and stir gently.
3. Pour mixture onto a buttered marble slab or similar surface. As soon as outside edges are cool enough to touch, pick up a small portion of the candy with buttered fingers and start stretching or pulling. Use only the tips of your fingers. Pull until taffy becomes light in color and is no longer sticky. Add food coloring or flavorings while pulling taffy.
4. Twist taffy into 1-inch-wide strips and place on waxed paper. When all the candy is pulled, use buttered scissors to cut each strip into 1-inch pieces. Wrap each piece in waxed paper and twist ends. Store in a covered container at room temperature.



Chocolate-Peanut Butter Bites

- 1 cup creamy peanut butter
- 1¼ cups heavy cream, divided
- 6 ounces semisweet chocolate, roughly chopped
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- Unsweetened cocoa powder, powdered sugar, sprinkles or colored sugar, optional

MAKES 64

1. In a heavy 2-quart saucepan over medium heat, stir together peanut butter and ½ cup cream until combined. Spread in the bottom of an 8-inch-square baking pan.
2. Place semisweet chocolate in a medium bowl.
3. In a heavy 2-quart saucepan, bring remaining ¾ cup cream and butter just to a boil, stirring occasionally.
4. Pour cream mixture over chocolate. Whisk until smooth. Pour over peanut butter layer.
5. Refrigerate until firm.
6. Using a teaspoon measure, scoop out a slightly heaping teaspoonful of the chocolate-peanut butter mixture. Roll into a ball. Repeat with remaining mixture. If mixture becomes too soft to roll, refrigerate until firm.
7. If desired, roll balls in cocoa powder, powdered sugar, sprinkles or colored sugar. Store in a covered container in the refrigerator.



Spice Pecan Brittle

- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 1 cup light corn syrup
- ½ cup water
- ¼ cup butter
- 2 cups pecans
- 1½ teaspoons baking soda
- 1 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

MAKES 2¼ LBS. (72 SERVINGS)

1. Generously butter an 18×12-inch baking sheet. Set aside.
2. In a Dutch oven, heat the sugar, corn syrup, water and butter to 275°F, stirring occasionally.
3. Stir in pecans. Continue cooking until temperature reaches 300°F, stirring constantly.
4. Remove from heat; stir in baking soda, pumpkin pie spice and vanilla.
5. Pour mixture onto prepared baking sheet and let cool. Break into bite-size pieces and store in an airtight container.



PACKING TIP: **KEEP BRITTLE FRESH** *in a reusable airtight container from the grocery or discount store.* **ADD A DECORATIVE PAPER BAND** *made from two pieces of card stock; punch the upper layer with a decorative paper punch.* **ADD A GIFT TAG** *and snowflake embellishment.*

Homemade marshmallows are a special treat as a topper for a cup of hot cocoa.



PACKING TIP:

KEEP MARSHMALLOWS FRESH *in a covered tin. Line the tin with white butcher paper that has been trimmed with decorative scissors and crimped using a paper crimper. To make sure the marshmallows will not stick together, lightly dust them with powdered sugar before placing them in the tin.*

Homemade Marshmallows

- 1 cup cold water, divided
- 3 0.25-ounce envelopes unflavored gelatin
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- ¾ cup light corn syrup
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1 0.75-ounce tube red writing gel
- ½ cup powdered sugar, divided

MAKES 48

1. Line a 13×9×2-inch pan with waxed paper. Generously spray bottom and sides with nonstick cooking spray.
2. Place ½ cup of the cold water in the bowl of an electric mixer. Sprinkle gelatin over the water.
3. In a heavy 2-quart saucepan over medium heat, bring granulated sugar, corn syrup, salt and remaining ½ cup water to a boil, stirring occasionally. Increase heat to high and let syrup boil without stirring until the temperature reaches 240°F.
4. With an electric mixer fitted with the whisk attachment on medium speed, beat hot syrup into gelatin mixture. Increase speed to high and beat for 15 minutes until mixture is bright white, has tripled in volume and has a whipped appearance. Add vanilla a few minutes before the end of beating.
5. Spread marshmallow mixture into pan. Working quickly, drizzle with red writing gel. Use a knife to make red swirls in the marshmallow. Let stand uncovered at room temperature for 8 to 12 hours.
6. Sift 1 tablespoon powdered sugar over the marshmallow. Invert marshmallow onto cutting board dusted with powdered sugar. Remove waxed paper and sift 1 tablespoon powdered sugar over marshmallow. Sift remaining powdered sugar onto a large plate.
7. Cut marshmallow into squares. Dip the cut sides into the powdered sugar on the plate.



English Toffee

- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup unsalted butter
- 2 teaspoons water
- ⅛ teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 6 ounces semisweet chocolate chips
- ⅓ cup finely chopped nuts

MAKES 16

1. In a large saucepan, combine sugar, butter, water and salt.
2. Cook over low heat until butter is melted.
3. Increase heat to medium-high. Cook until temperature reaches 300°F, stirring constantly.
4. Remove from heat; stir in vanilla.
5. Pour toffee onto a parchment-lined baking sheet; smooth with spatula to ⅛-inch thickness. Top with chocolate chips; when chocolate starts to melt, spread it to cover toffee.
6. Sprinkle with finely chopped nuts. Refrigerate toffee until chocolate is set; break into pieces.

6 best-*ever* cookies

SCRUMPTIOUS TREATS THAT ARE A JOY TO MAKE

Chocolate-Dipped Macaroons

Chocolate-Drizzled Pecan Tarts

Brown Sugar Shortbread

Candy Stripe Cookies

Peanut Butter Sandwiches

Ultimate Monster Cookies

STYLED BY **KRISTI JACKSON** PHOTOGRAPHED BY **TOBIN BENNETT**



1

Chocolate-Dipped Macaroons

- 1 **7-ounce package flaked coconut**
- 1 **cup granulated sugar**
- ½ **cup all-purpose flour**
- ¼ **teaspoon salt**
- 4 **lightly beaten egg whites**
- ½ **teaspoon almond extract**
- 1 **7-ounce container dipping chocolate**

MAKES 30

1. Preheat oven to 325°F. Line two large cookie sheets with parchment paper; set aside.

2. In a medium bowl, combine coconut, sugar, flour and salt. Stir in egg whites and almond extract.

3. Drop by tablespoonfuls 1½ inches apart onto prepared cookie sheets. Bake in preheated oven for 20 minutes or until edges are golden brown. Cool completely on wire rack.

4. Melt chocolate according to package directions. Dip cooled macaroons halfway into chocolate; place on waxed-paper-lined cookie sheet. Cool completely or refrigerate 10 to 15 minutes to set chocolate.



2 Brown Sugar Shortbread

- ¾ cup unsalted butter, softened
- ½ cup firmly packed brown sugar
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1¾ cups all-purpose flour
- Pinch salt

MAKES 24

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.

2. Beat butter and brown sugar until combined. Beat in vanilla.

3. Add flour and salt. Stir until dough begins to form a ball.

4. Roll dough to ½-inch thickness. Cut into 2-inch circles or 3×1-inch rectangles. If desired, prick with a fork. Place on ungreased baking sheets.

5. Bake in preheated oven for 22 to 24 minutes or until golden brown. Cool on a wire rack.

Variations:

Shortbread crust for fruit pizza: Press dough into an 11-inch tart pan with a removable bottom. Bake in a 350°F oven for 20 minutes or until golden brown. Cool on wire rack for 10 minutes. Remove rim and allow to cool completely.

Dipped shortbread: Dip cookies in melted dark, semisweet or white chocolate and roll in toasted and chopped almonds, walnuts or pecans.

Cinnamon-sugar shortbread: Add ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon to butter mixture.

PACKING TIP:

KEEP COOKIES FRESH *in tiny plastic bags tied with colored string, floss or twist ties. Reusable containers such as this mug make a good gift great—this one can hold a large latte to enjoy with the cookies. Dress up containers with pretty scrapbook papers or layered ribbons and hang tags.*







PACKING TIP:

CELLOPHANE BAGS HOLD COOKIES, *such as these Peanut Butter Sandwiches, that can be stacked without breaking. Tie the package closed with a colorful ribbon. Add a label made on a computer to share a special holiday greeting.*

3 Peanut Butter Sandwiches

- **1 16.5-ounce package refrigerated peanut butter cookie dough**
- **Granulated sugar**
- **1 cup powdered sugar**
- **½ cup creamy peanut butter**
- **4½ tablespoons unsalted butter, softened**
- **1½ tablespoons heavy cream**
- **Mini chocolate chips or finely chopped peanuts, if desired**

MAKES 19

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.

2. Spoon and shape cookie dough into 1-inch balls. Place on ungreased cookie sheet and flatten slightly with a cup dipped in granulated sugar.

3. Bake in preheated oven for 9 to 11 minutes or until light golden brown. Allow to cool completely on wire rack.

4. Meanwhile, beat together powdered sugar, peanut butter and softened butter until smooth. Add heavy cream and mix until light and creamy.

5. Place 1 tablespoon creamed mixture on bottom side of half of cookies. Top with remaining cookies, bottom side to filling.

6. Roll edges in mini chocolate chips or finely chopped peanuts, if desired.



4

Ultimate Monster Cookies

- 1 cup butter, softened
- 3 cups creamy peanut butter
- 2 ½ cups packed brown sugar
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 6 eggs
- 1 ½ teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 ½ teaspoons light corn syrup
- 9 cups uncooked quick oats
- 1 12-ounce package chocolate chips
- 1 9.4-ounce package candy-coated chocolate pieces
- 4 teaspoons baking soda

MAKES 102

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.

2. In a large bowl, beat together butter, peanut butter, brown sugar, granulated sugar, eggs, vanilla and corn syrup. Stir in remaining ingredients.

3. Drop by tablespoonfuls onto cookie sheets and flatten slightly.

4. Bake in preheated oven for 10 to 12 minutes. Do not overbake.

5 Candy Stripe Cookies

- ½ cup unsalted butter, room temperature
- ½ cup butter-flavored shortening
- 1½ cups granulated sugar
- 1 large egg
- 2 tablespoon milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon mint extract
- Red food coloring
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 1 tablespoon cream cheese
- 1 tablespoon milk
- Mint extract, to taste

MAKES 42

1. Cream butter, shortening and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in egg, milk and vanilla.

2. Stir together flour, baking soda and salt. Stir in until just combined.

3. Divide dough in half. Flavor half the dough with ½ teaspoon mint extract and tint with red food coloring.

4. Line a loaf pan with waxed paper.

5. Divide each portion of dough in half. Press half of the red dough in the bottom of the pan. Top with half of the white dough, then the remaining red dough and the remaining white dough. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour or until thoroughly chilled.

6. Preheat oven to 350°F. Invert pan and remove waxed paper. Cut dough in half lengthwise. Cut each half into ¼-inch slices and place slices 2 inches apart on an ungreased baking sheet.

7. Bake in preheated oven for 10 to 12 minutes or until edges begin to brown. Cool on a wire rack.

8. To make glaze, beat together powdered sugar, cream cheese, milk and mint extract. Drizzle over cooled cookies.



PACKING TIP:

WRAP A STRIP OF BUTCHER PAPER *around a stack of three cookies; tape paper in place. Create a decorative label using a computer and attach it to the butcher paper with double-stick tape. Wrap the packaging with white string and knot it to hold the paper in place.*



6

Chocolate-Drizzled Pecan Tarts

- ½ cup unsalted butter, softened
- 4 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ¾ cup pecans, chopped
- ½ cup packed brown sugar
- ¼ cup dark corn syrup
- 1 large egg
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter, melted
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 tablespoon powdered sugar
- 1 tablespoon melted chocolate

MAKES 24

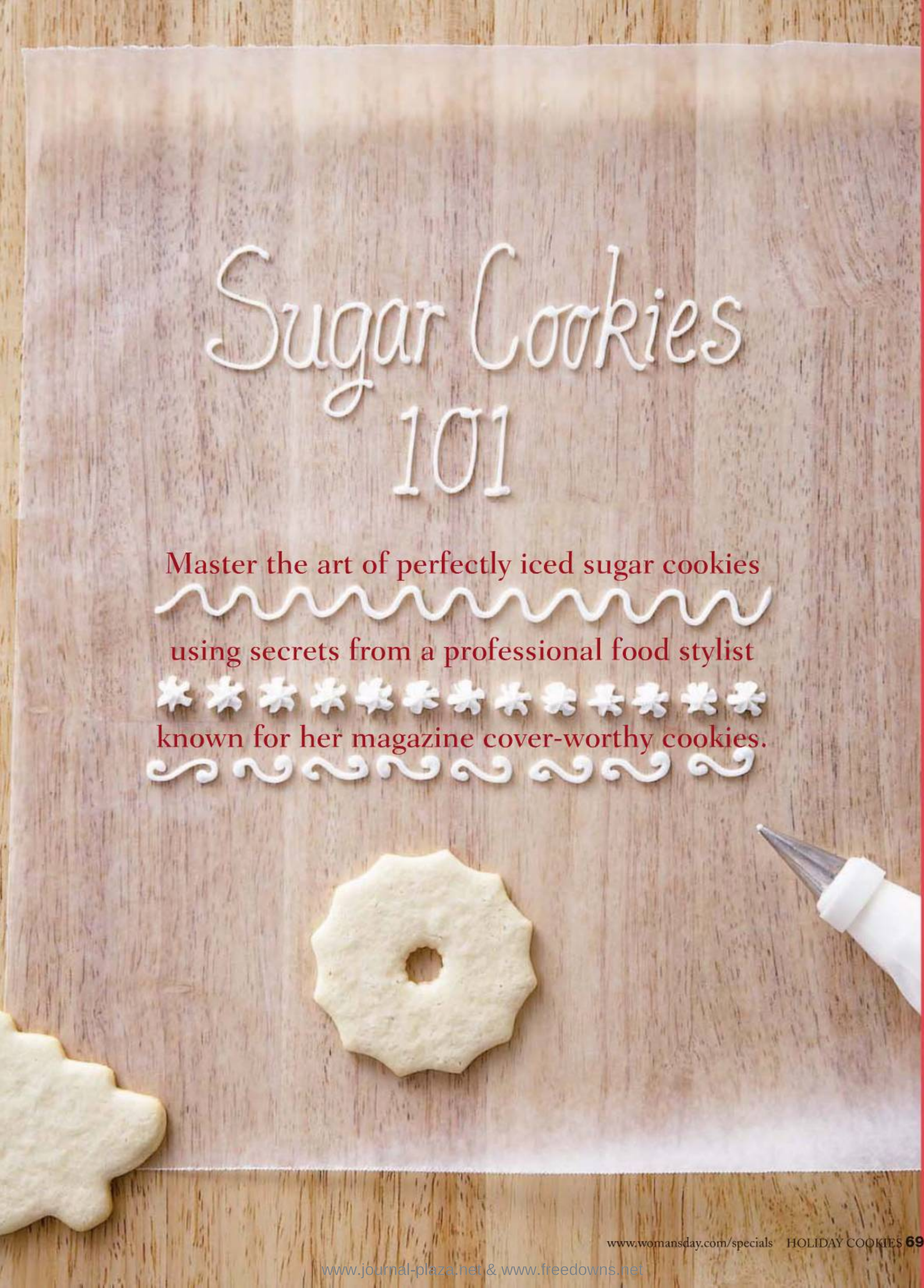
1. Preheat oven to 325°F.
2. In a large bowl, cream butter and cream cheese; add flour and mix well. Cover and refrigerate 1 hour.
3.. Shape cream cheese mixture into 24 1-inch balls and press into ungreased mini-muffin pans. Set aside.
4. In a large bowl, combine pecans, brown sugar, dark corn syrup, egg, butter and vanilla. Spoon 1 teaspoon of pecan mixture into each cup.
5. Bake in preheated oven 25 minutes; cool.
6. Dust with powdered sugar and drizzle with melted chocolate.

Labels & Tags

Use these templates to create your own gift tags and cards



COOKIE STYLING BY **JENNIFER PETERSON** PHOTOGRAPHED BY **TOBIN BENNETT**



Sugar Cookies 101

Master the art of perfectly iced sugar cookies using secrets from a professional food stylist known for her magazine cover-worthy cookies.



The Dough:

A worthy foundation

1. EVERY GOOD DECORATED SUGAR COOKIE STARTS with a great recipe (see page 75). For cutout cookies, cover cookie dough with plastic wrap and chill for 30 minutes before rolling out.

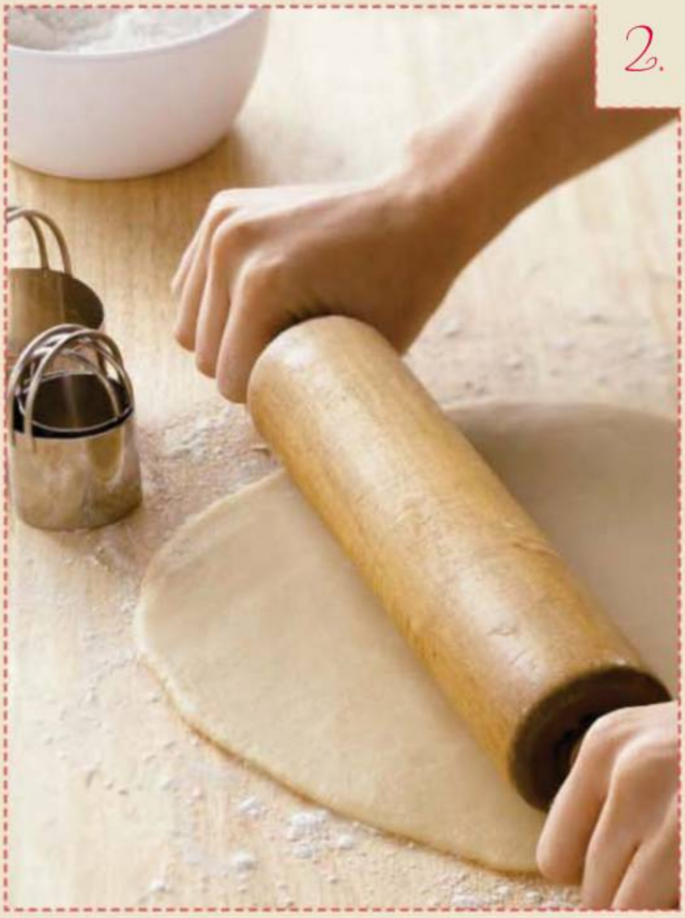
2. LIMIT THE AMOUNT OF FLOUR used to roll out the dough. It's important to have a light dusting on the board so the dough does not stick, yet not too much or the dough becomes tough.

3. DIP COOKIE CUTTERS in flour and tap off before each cut for a perfectly shaped cookie.



1.

2.



3.





1.

The Cover-up:

Icing adds beauty

1. USE A CLEAN BRUSH to paint a heavy coat of Frosting Glaze, page 75, onto the cookies, making sure glaze doesn't run over the edge. Use the edge of a knife to clean off any extra glaze around the edges, if needed.

2. PIPE GLAZE AROUND THE OUTER EDGE of the cookies to create a clean border. Let the cookies dry on a cooling rack.

3. PIPE WHITE OR COLORED GLAZE onto the cookies in dots, stripes, zigzags and other desired shapes. Let dry.

4. PIPE A SECOND COLORED GLAZE onto the cookies in the desired shapes. Let dry.

5. SPRINKLE COOKIES WITH SUGAR as a finishing touch and to add sparkle.

2.



3.



4.



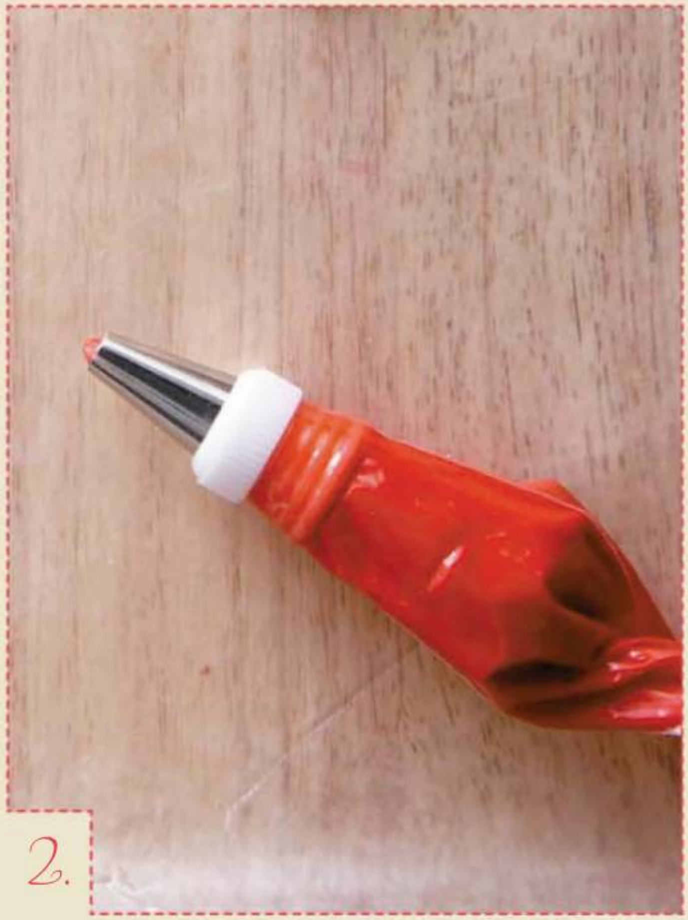
5.



1.



2.



3.



The Decorations:

Tips from the pro

1. TAKE YOUR TIME to perfect the glaze consistency and to lay down the foundation color so it is smooth and flawless.

2. FILL A SEPARATE BAG with each glaze color before beginning to decorate.

3. LET COOKIES DRY between coats so the glaze colors won't bleed into each other.

Basic Sugar Cookie

- 1 cup butter
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- ½ cup powdered sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 ½ cups all-purpose flour

MAKES ABOUT 48

1. Preheat oven to 375°F.
2. In a large bowl, beat butter and sugars until blended.
3. Beat in egg, vanilla, baking powder and salt. Gradually beat in flour on low speed.
4. This dough can be rolled into 1-inch balls and placed on a baking sheet to bake, or chill the dough for 30 minutes before rolling out for cutout cookies.
5. Bake in preheated oven for 10 minutes or until edges turn light golden. Place on wire rack to cool before decorating.

Frosting Glaze

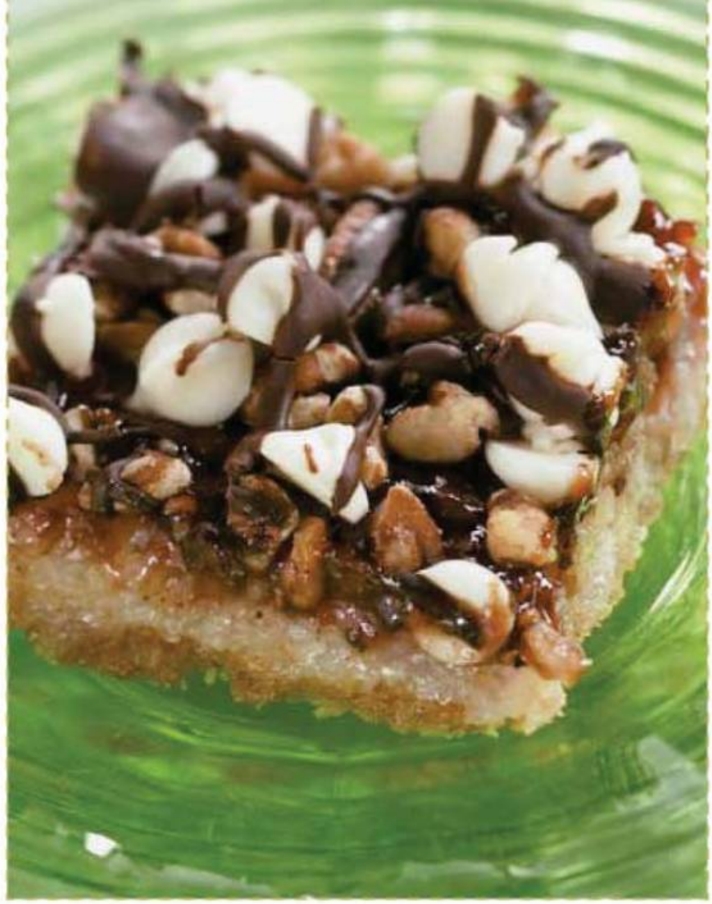
- 6 cups powdered sugar
- 2 tablespoons light corn syrup
- 4 tablespoons milk
- 1½ teaspoons clear vanilla

MAKES 3½ CUPS

In a large bowl mix ingredients, adding more milk as necessary until desired consistency is reached.











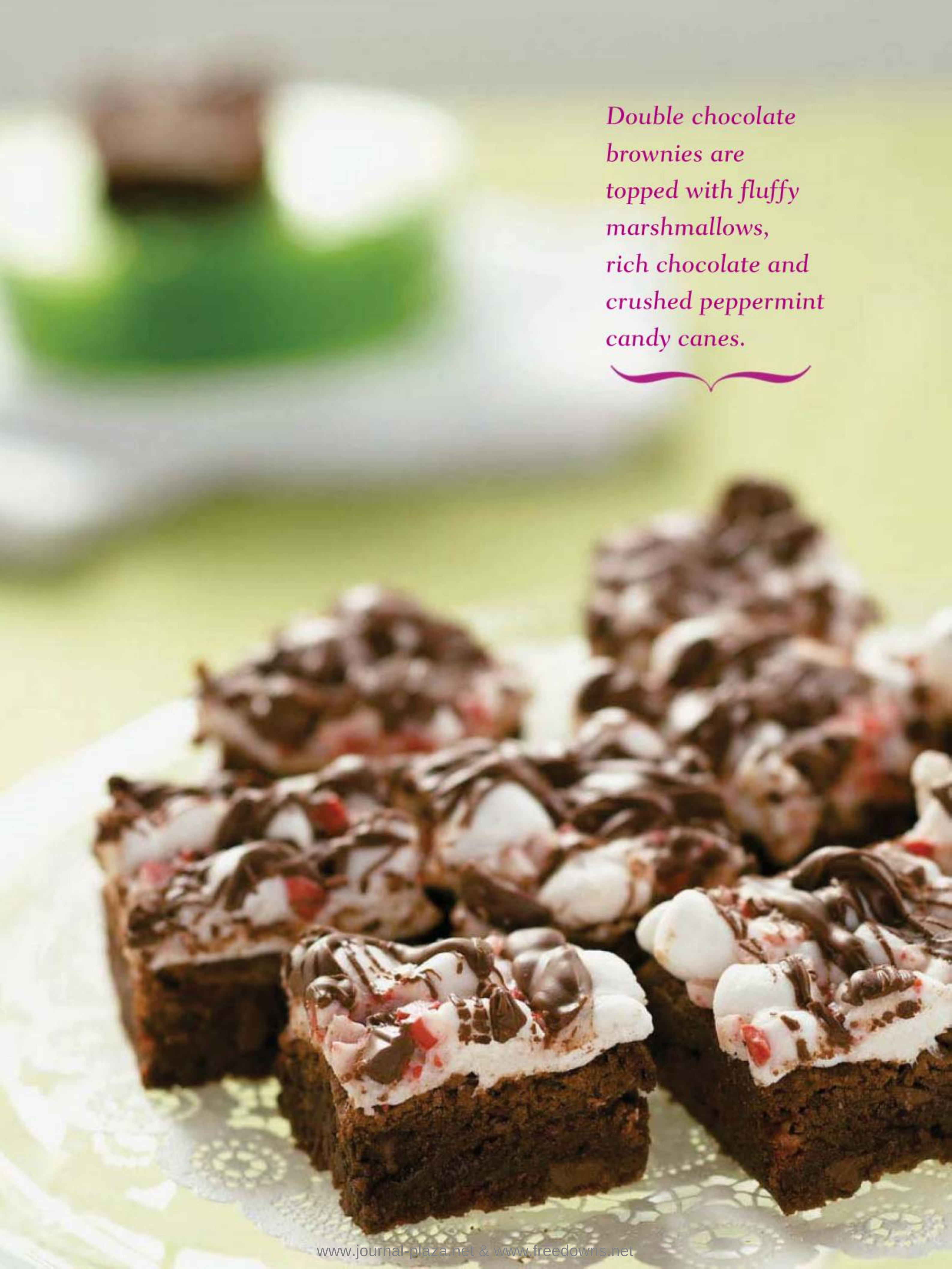


STYLED BY **ALISON VENTLING** PHOTOGRAPHED BY **TOBIN BENNETT**



Here's the secret to success: Decadent ingredients make the difference between ho-hum bars and these special treats.

RAISING THE BAR



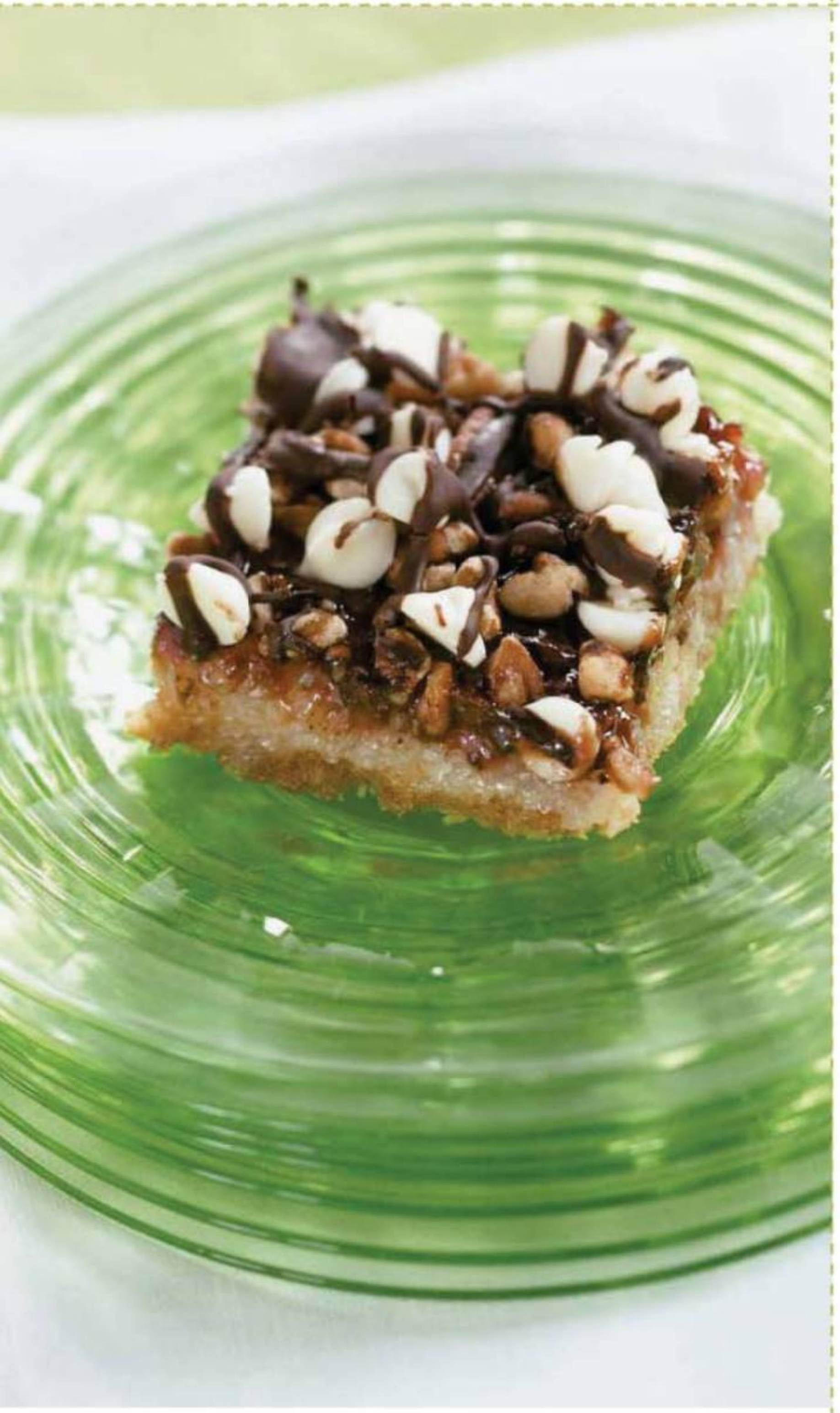
Double chocolate brownies are topped with fluffy marshmallows, rich chocolate and crushed peppermint candy canes.

AVALANCHE BROWNIES

- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 1 cup butter, melted
- ½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 5 eggs, beaten
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup semisweet or milk chocolate chips
- 8 peppermint candy canes, crushed
- 1 10-ounce bag mini marshmallows
- 1 12-ounce bag semisweet or milk chocolate chips, melted

MAKES 36

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease a 13×9×2-inch baking pan.
2. In a medium bowl, combine sugar, butter, cocoa powder and salt. Stir until smooth. Stir in eggs and vanilla. Add flour, then stir in chocolate chips.
3. Spread batter in prepared pan. Bake in preheated oven for 30 to 35 minutes.
4. While brownies are still hot, sprinkle the top with half of the crushed candy canes, followed by the marshmallows and the remaining crushed candy canes. Drizzle with melted chocolate chips. Cool. Cut with a sharp knife.



RASPBERRY CHOCOLATE BARS

- **1¾ cups graham-cracker crumbs**
- **½ cup + 2 tablespoons butter, melted**
- **3 cups flaked coconut**
- **1½ cups sweetened condensed milk**
- **1 12-ounce jar seedless red raspberry jam**
- **1⅔ cups white baking chips**
- **¾ cup chopped walnuts, toasted**
- **1 6-ounce bag semisweet chocolate chips, melted**

MAKES 36

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease a 13×9×2-inch baking pan.

2. In a small bowl, combine graham-cracker crumbs and butter. Press mixture into pan. Sprinkle with coconut and drizzle with sweetened condensed milk. Bake in preheated oven 20 to 25 minutes or until lightly browned.

3. Stir jam to soften; carefully spread over warm coconut mixture in pan. Sprinkle with white baking chips and nuts.

4. Drizzle with melted chocolate chips. Cool completely; cut into bars.



SOUTHERN PECAN PIE BARS

- **½ cup butter, cold**
- **1½ cups all-purpose flour**
- **5 tablespoons water**
- **6 tablespoons butter**
- **1¼ cup packed dark brown sugar**
- **½ cup light corn syrup**
- **½ teaspoon salt**
- **3 large eggs, beaten**
- **2 teaspoons vanilla extract**
- **1½ cups pecans, chopped**
- **16 pecan halves, toasted**

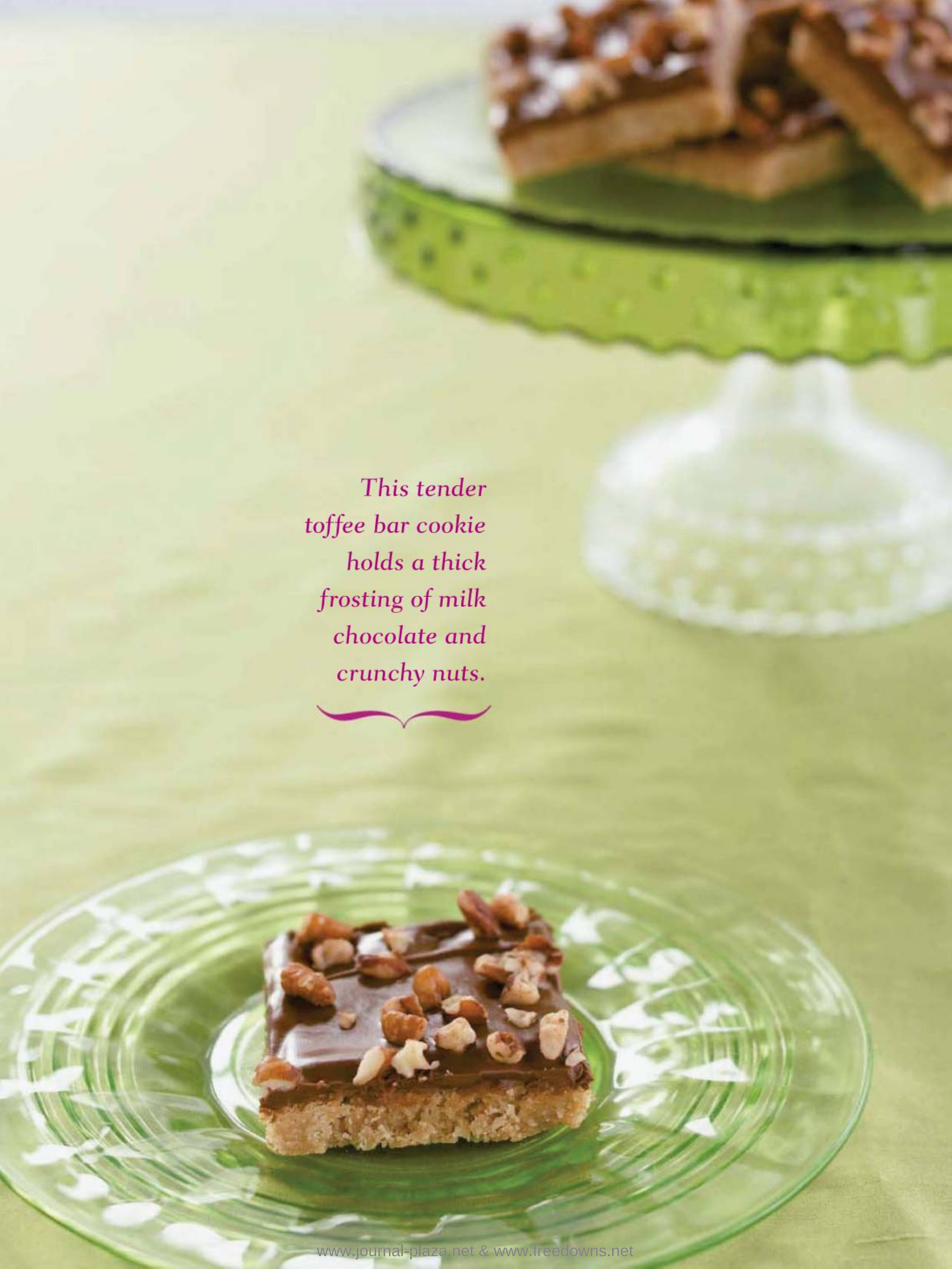
MAKES 16

1. In a medium bowl, cut cold butter into flour until pieces are the size of small peas. Gradually add water until dough just holds together. Form into a ball. Wrap with plastic and chill in refrigerator for 1 hour.

2. On a floured surface, roll out dough into a 10-inch square. Place in an 8-inch-square baking pan and press into corners and up sides. Chill 15 minutes.

3. Preheat oven to 350°F.

4. To prepare filling, in a medium saucepan melt 5 tablespoons butter; remove from heat. Stir in brown sugar, corn syrup and salt until smooth. Cool slightly. Add eggs and vanilla and beat until well combined. Fold in chopped pecans. Pour filling into pastry-lined pan. If dough extends beyond filling, trim dough with knife. Bake in center of preheated oven for 50 to 60 minutes or until filling is set. While bars are cooling, top with pecan halves.



This tender toffee bar cookie holds a thick frosting of milk chocolate and crunchy nuts.

TOFFEE BARS

- 1 cup butter
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 egg yolk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 6 milk chocolate candy bars
- ¼ cup chopped pecans

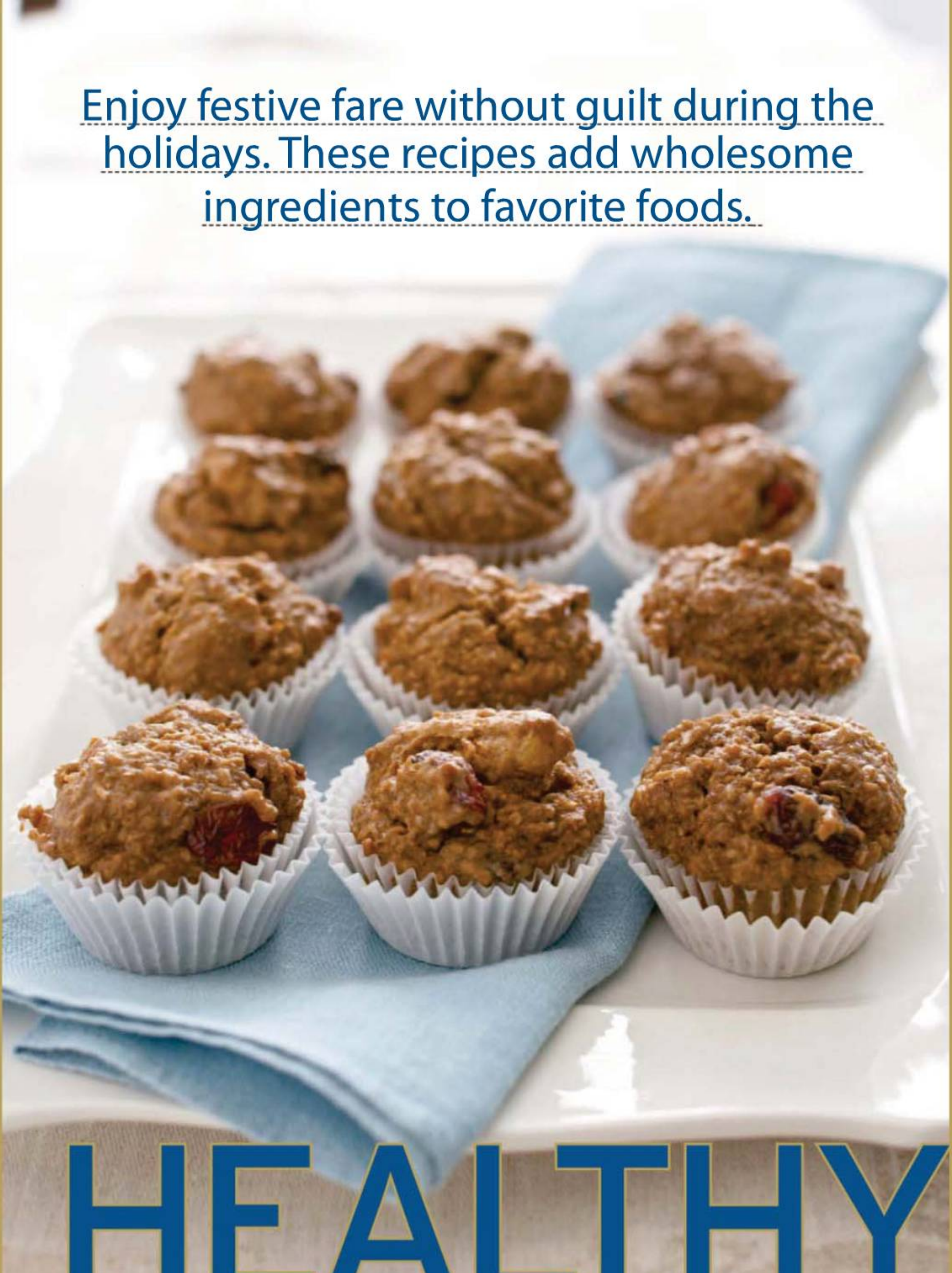
MAKES 48

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease a 15×10×1-inch jelly roll pan.
2. In a medium bowl, beat together butter and brown sugar. Add egg yolk and vanilla; beat until smooth. Beat in flour.
3. Press mixture into pan. Bake for 15 minutes.
4. Immediately after removing pan from oven, place candy bars on top and allow to melt. Spread the melted chocolate evenly over the surface with a spatula. Sprinkle with chopped nuts. While still warm, cut with a sharp knife.



HEALTHY

Enjoy festive fare without guilt during the holidays. These recipes add wholesome ingredients to favorite foods.





HOLIDAY *treats*

STYLED BY **ALISON VENTLING** PHOTOGRAPHED BY **TOBIN BENNETT**



Wholesome cookies with pumpkin, raisins, walnuts and aromatic spices mix traditional holiday flavors with good-for-you nutrition.

PUMPKIN-OATMEAL RAISIN COOKIES

- **2 cups all-purpose flour**
- **1⅓ cups quick oats**
- **1 teaspoon baking soda**
- **1 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- **½ teaspoon salt**
- **1 cup butter, softened**
- **1 cup packed brown sugar**
- **1 cup granulated sugar**
- **1 cup canned pumpkin**
- **1 large egg**
- **1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- **¾ cup chopped walnuts**
- **¾ cup raisins**

MAKES 64

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Lightly grease baking sheets.

2. Combine flour, oats, baking soda, cinnamon and salt in medium bowl.

3. Beat butter, brown sugar and granulated sugar in large mixer bowl until light and fluffy. Add pumpkin, egg and vanilla extract; mix well. Add flour mixture; mix well. Stir in nuts and raisins.

4. Drop by rounded tablespoonfuls onto prepared baking sheets.

5. Bake in preheated oven for 14 to 16 minutes or until cookies are lightly browned and set in centers. Cool on baking sheets for 2 minutes; remove to wire racks to cool completely.



Heart-healthy blueberries stud a creamy apricot filling in this tender granola bar. Oatmeal streusel adds a sweet, crunchy contrast to the velvety center, making these bars a treat to eat.



GRANOLA BLUEBERRY APRICOT BARS

Filling

- 1 cup apricot marmalade
- ¾ cup milk
- ½ cup shredded sweetened coconut
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ½ cup frozen blueberries

Granola Base

- 2 cups quick oats
- 1 cup packed dark brown sugar
- ¾ cup all-purpose flour
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ cup butter, melted

MAKES 16

1. For filling, in a saucepan over medium heat, cook marmalade, milk, coconut and vanilla about 15 minutes or until mixture boils and thickens, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat and stir in blueberries; set aside to cool.
2. For granola base, in a bowl combine oats, brown sugar, flour, baking soda and cinnamon; mix well. Pour melted butter over dry ingredients and stir until thoroughly moistened.
3. Press 3 cups of granola mix into bottom of an 8-inch-square baking pan. Place in refrigerator for 30 minutes.
4. Preheat oven to 350°F.
5. Spread cooled filling evenly over granola base. Sprinkle remaining base mixture over filling and bake in preheated oven for 25 minutes. Cool to room temperature before cutting.

MIGHTY MINI-MUFFINS

- 1½ cups bran flakes cereal
- ¾ cup all-purpose flour
- ¾ cup whole-wheat flour
- ½ cup ground flax seed
- ¾ cup + 2 tablespoons packed brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup low-fat buttermilk
- ¼ cup canola oil
- 2 tablespoons unsweetened applesauce
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ½ cup dried cranberries
- ½ cup chopped walnuts

MAKES 48

Crumbs are not a problem with these pop-in-your-mouth snacks. They hit the spot as a nutritious snack for the whole family or as a light dessert in packed lunches.

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. In a large mixing bowl, combine the first 10 ingredients.
2. Whisk together the eggs, buttermilk, oil, applesauce and vanilla; gently stir into dry ingredients just until moistened, taking care not to overmix.
3. Gently stir in cranberries and walnuts.
4. Spray mini muffin tins with nonstick cooking spray; spoon batter into tins until almost full.
5. Bake in preheated oven about 12 minutes. Remove muffin tins from oven; allow to cool for 1 to 2 minutes. Gently loosen and remove muffins; cool on a wire rack.
6. To store, wrap cooled muffins in plastic or place in resealable freezer bags or freezer containers. Freeze up to one month.



Hearty, bite-size flax, bran and wheat muffins are flecked with dried cranberries and walnuts.

Traditional brownies get a healthy makeover with wheat flour, oatmeal, nonfat milk and egg whites.



CHOCOLATE WHEAT BROWNIES

- **3 tablespoons butter**
- **⅓ cup packed brown sugar**
- **¾ cup unsweetened cocoa powder**
- **1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- **¾ cup quick oats**
- **½ cup chopped nuts**
- **⅓ cup whole-wheat flour**
- **⅓ cup nonfat dry milk**
- **½ teaspoon baking powder**
- **4 egg whites**

MAKES 12 SERVINGS

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. In a medium microwave-safe bowl, melt butter in microwave; stir in sugar. Stir in cocoa powder and vanilla.
2. In a larger bowl, combine oats, nuts, flour, dry milk and baking powder.
3. Beat egg whites into sugar mix until slightly thick, then combine with dry ingredients.
4. Spread into a greased 8-inch-square baking dish.
5. Bake in preheated oven for 20 minutes or until edges are firm and top is crisp. Cool before cutting.

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Try it FREE for 30 DAYS! *Read below to find out how...*

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Rachel has found that the fastest way to minimize the visible appearance of wrinkles—even the most stubborn ones—is with **Hydroxatone® Instant Wrinkle Filler**. That's why it goes with her on every job and never fails when called on to help leading ladies get ready for their close-up... even in high-definition.

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"It was amazing! The lines above my lips disappeared, as did my brow lines and crows feet! I feel 10 years younger and I'm going out dancing tonight!"

–Nikki P., Age 55



LIPS BEFORE INSTANT WRINKLE FILLER



LIPS AFTER INSTANT WRINKLE FILLER

Actual Unretouched Photos

Developed by a Surgeon

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You don't need to wait long to look younger. The silicone micro beads in **Hydroxatone® Instant Wrinkle Filler** trigger an immediate and significant optical wrinkle elimination. The super-hydrating ingredient, Hyaluronic Acid, rapidly plumps up lines from the inside. Just smooth the filler into your laugh lines, crow's feet or even depressed scars for instant results. Wrinkles are gone, even in close-up situations.

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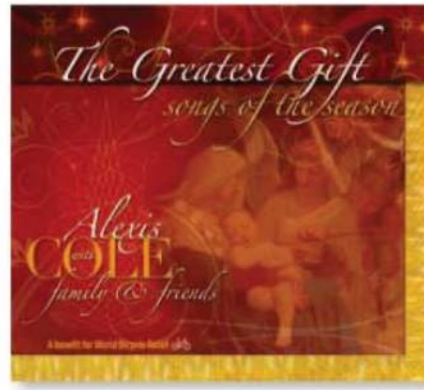
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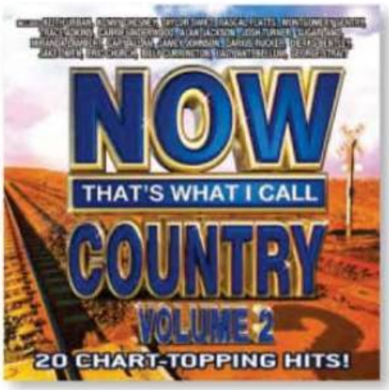
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that will keep your loved ones entertained through the holiday season.

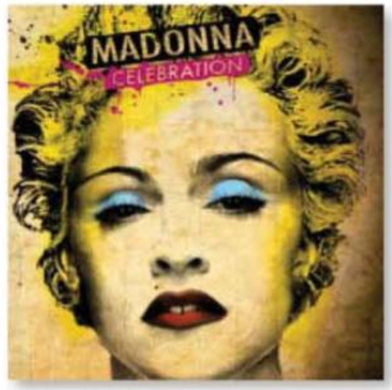


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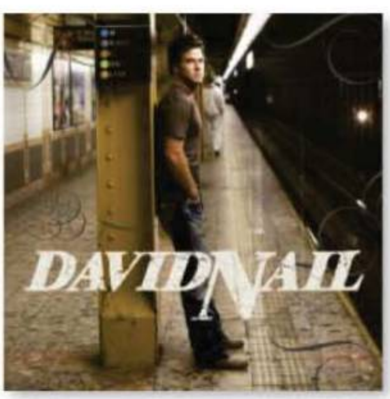


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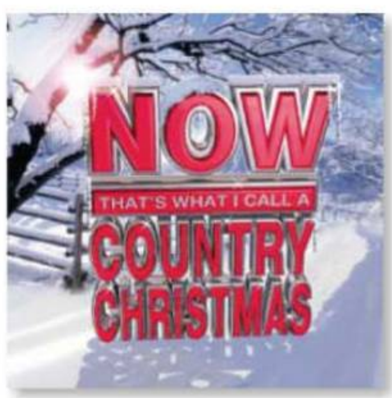
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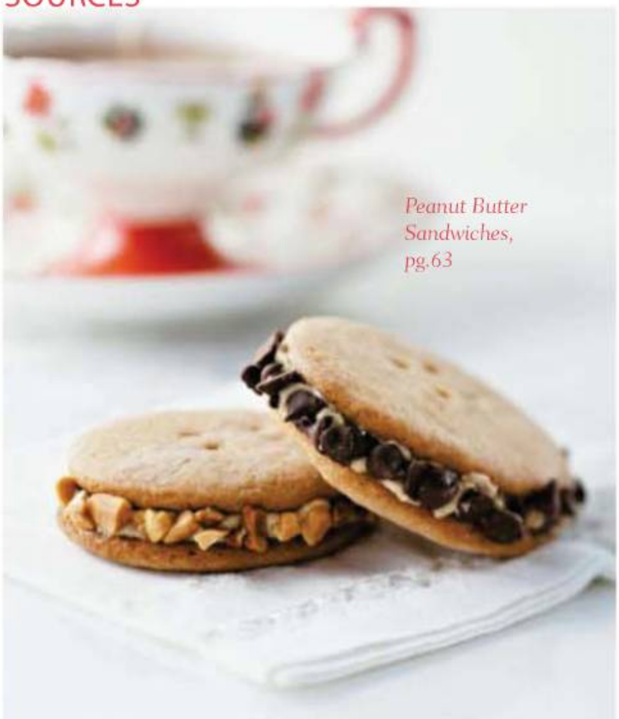
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MARKET SQUARE

Hot Cocoa Mix

- 1½ **cups unsweetened cocoa powder**
- 2 **cups granulated sugar**
- 1 **cup French vanilla coffee creamer**
- ½ **cup nonfat dry milk**

MAKES 5 CUPS

1. In a large bowl, whisk together cocoa powder, sugar, coffee creamer and dry milk; pour into pint-size jars or bags.
2. If using a jar, place the lid and ring on the jar. Cover the top with a 5-inch paper circle (use hot glue gun to adhere the paper to the lid) or a 5-inch sticker and finger pleat the paper around the edges. Tie with ribbon. If using a bag, seal with stickers or punch a hole in the bag and tie closed with a ribbon.
3. Attach a gift label to the front and an instruction label to the back of the jar or bag. The instructions should read as follows: Stir together 3 tablespoons Hot Cocoa Mix and 1 tablespoon water in a mug. Stir in 1 cup skim milk. Microwave on HIGH for 1 to 1½ minutes or until hot.

SWEET TIP:
The perfect partner to a tasty cookie is a steaming cup of cocoa. Give a gift of a plate of cookies alongside a jar or bag of homemade cocoa mix. Add a large mug or two and some homemade marshmallows *(see recipe, page 57)* *for a complete snack package.*



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